



# FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

## 2006 Bond Referendums Information for Residents

### Two Bond Issues on the Ballot on Nov. 7

*Fairfax County voters will be asked to vote YES or NO on two individual bond questions in the Nov. 7, 2006, general election. The ballot will include separate questions for public safety facilities bonds and parks and*

*park facilities bonds. The public safety bonds question asks voters to allow the county to borrow \$125 million for construction, expansion and renovation of public safety, civil and criminal justice facilities.*

*The parks bonds question asks voters to allow the county to borrow \$25 million for use by the Fairfax County Park Authority to acquire land and develop new facilities.*

### Public Safety Facilities Bonds - \$125 Million

The public safety facilities bonds total \$125 million. These bonds would allow Fairfax County to borrow money to finance the renovation, capital renewal, construction and expansion of public safety, civil and criminal justice facilities. Of the \$125 million in public safety bonds, \$71.1 will go to police facilities, \$29.1 million will go to fire and rescue facilities, and \$24.8 million will go for capital renewal and improvements at public safety, civil and criminal justice facilities.

#### Police Facilities

To address critical space shortages, three district police stations and the animal shelter will be renovated, expanded and updated. The Fair Oaks, McLean and Reston district stations were built more than 20 years ago, and the county's population has more than doubled during this time. The police force also has grown proportionately, and these stations must expand their facilities to accommodate increases in the workforce, calls for service and ever-changing technology and equipment requirements.

#### Fair Oaks Police Station, \$17.4 Million

Opened in 1983, this police station, which is collocated with the Fair Oaks Fire Station, will receive major renovations, infrastructure renewal and expansion. The police station's total square footage will be increased from 25,500 square feet to approximately 30,700.

This expansion is based on projected staffing levels in the future. Major building systems that are at the end of their useful life will be replaced, and the fire station will receive minor renovations.

#### McLean Police Station, \$17.9 Million

This station opened in 1972, and the facility requires renovation, infrastructure renewal and expansion to meet current and future operational and staffing requirements. Based on projected staffing levels in the future, the station's square footage will be increased from 21,500 up to approximately 31,000 square feet. The Dranesville District Supervisor's office will move from the station, and the vacated space will be renovated for police use. Bond funds will *not* be used to relocate the Supervisor's office.

#### Reston Police Station, \$18.8 Million

This station opened in 1985, and the building requires major renovations, infrastructure renewal and expansion to meet space shortages. Major building systems that are at the end of their useful life also require replacement. Based on projected staffing levels for this district in the future, the station's square footage will be increased from 16,000 to approximately 34,600 square feet. The Hunter Mill District Supervisor's office, which is collocated with the station, will undergo infrastructure renewal and expansion.

#### West Ox Animal Shelter, \$17 Million

During the past 20 years, the pet population in the county has increased more than 58%, and the shelter, which opened in 1975, is overcrowded, requiring major renovations and expansion. The shelter's most recent inspection, conducted by the Humane Society of the United States, recommended a complete upgrade of the air handling system. The current system is not designed to control airborne diseases common when large numbers of animals are housed together. The expansion also will provide for a separate area to house sick animals and an area to house small reptiles.

*For more information about police facilities that are part of the public safety bonds, contact the Fairfax County Police Department, 4100 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-246-2253, TTY 711. You can visit their Web page at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police) or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond).*

#### Fire and Rescue Facilities

#### Great Falls Volunteer Fire Station, \$12 Million

This station, which opened in 1960, is the oldest emergency facility in the county. A larger facility is needed to meet current operational requirements, including larger bays for modern equipment and space for more firefighters. Through a proposed agreement with the Great Falls Volunteer Fire

## The following are some pro and con arguments about financing capital projects through bond funding.

### PRO

Some county residents feel that these bond referendums are a vital part of the county's comprehensive approach to the problem of funding needed capital facilities, and should be passed. Here are the arguments used by proponents of bond funding:

- Bonding spreads the cost of major projects of general benefit to county residents over future years and ensures that both current and future residents and users share in the payment.
- Spreading the cost of major projects permits the county to accomplish more projects sooner than other methods of financing.
- Constructing the proposed improvements to public safety and parks and park facilities from current general tax dollars cannot be accomplished without substantial cuts to current programs or increased revenues from taxes and fees.
- Prudent use of long-term debt can be accomplished without having any adverse impact on the county or the tax rate.

### CON

Some county residents feel that the issuing of general obligation bonds is neither justified nor a viable solution to the county's capital facility needs. Here are the arguments used by opponents:

- Issuing general obligation bonds results in a long-term future obligation for the county that may create an unmanageable burden on future taxpayers. Pay-as-you-go financing would not create long-term debt.
- Costs of facilities should be carried by those directly using or benefiting from a facility, not by all taxpayers.
- These facilities could be fully or partially paid for out of the current revenues by cutting or eliminating other programs.
- The funds currently spent on debt service could support a substantial pay-as-you-go program of capital construction adequate to meet the county's needs.

Department, Fairfax County will share the cost to build a new station that will be approximately 17,500 square feet. Using bond funds, the county will pay to construct up to 15,500 square feet. The Volunteer Fire Department will use its own funds to build any square footage above this figure.

### Fire and Rescue Training Academy, \$17.1 Million

The academy requires expanded facilities to train more than 1,300 uniformed personnel. The number of fire and rescue personnel has increased by 69% since the academy was last expanded 23 years ago, and the demand for training and additional mandatory certification continues to rise. The academy provides training in urban search and rescue, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, emergency medical services and other specialized subjects. The academy will be expanded by approximately 20,000 square feet, and a new, multi-function training building and rappelling tower will be built. The new building will allow personnel to simulate responding to emergencies at light industrial, commercial and residential buildings.

*For more information about Fire and Rescue facilities that are part of the*

*public safety bonds, contact the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, 4100 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-246-4630, TTY 711. You can visit their Web page at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr) or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond).*

### Capital Facility and Renewal Projects, \$24.8 Million

Bond funds will finance capital facilities renovations and improvements at public safety, civil and criminal justice facilities. Major building systems and equipment at these facilities, including the historic courthouse, need to be replaced, including heating, air conditioning, plumbing, electrical and fire alarm systems. Funds also will pay for security enhancements at existing public safety, civil and criminal justice facilities, as well as to acquire land for the Herndon Fire Station.

*For more information about capital facilities projects to be funded by the public safety bonds, contact the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 551, Fairfax, VA 22035, 703-324-3187, TTY 711; send e-mail to [wwwopa@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:wwwopa@fairfaxcounty.gov); or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond).*

## Parks and Park Facilities Bonds - \$25 Million

The parks and park facilities bond question asks the voters whether to allow the county to borrow \$25 million to acquire new parks and develop and improve park facilities.

The Fairfax County Park Authority currently administers over 23,677 acres of parkland and 400 individual parks. These include county parks that provide countywide services, including golf, camping, skating, boating; stream valley trails, natural resource areas and historic sites; district parks that provide area-wide services, such as ball field complexes, RECenters, dog parks and athletic courts; and neighborhood facilities, such as playgrounds, multi-use courts, picnic areas and open space. Approximately one-half of the Park Authority's operating costs are covered by fees charged by revenue-producing facilities, including RECenters and golf courses. The remaining operating funds are appropriated by the Fairfax County

Board of Supervisors from the county's combined general fund.

The Park Authority's user fees do not cover the cost of developing new facilities or the major renovation of existing facilities. These improvements are funded primarily through two mechanisms: revenue bonds and general obligation bonds. The general obligation bonds are primarily utilized for the renovation of existing facilities. The utilization of general obligation bonds is also a way to ensure current users are not burdened with the full cost of improvements, and thus these bonds spread the cost of the improvements over an extended period of time. This ensures future generations of park users will also be contributing to the cost since they will benefit from these improved facilities. The utilization of general obligation bonds also affords the county the opportunity to borrow funds at a very competitive interest rate.

According to a survey conducted as part of the 2004 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment process, 80% of county households visited at least one of the county's parks during the preceding year, and 80% of county residents endorse the renovation of existing facilities, as well as the acquisition and preservation of open space.

The parks bonds will be spent on the following areas:

### **Land Acquisition Program, \$10 Million**

The Park Authority has proposed \$10 million in bond funds to acquire new parkland. The acquisition program targets sites that meet established criteria, such as areas of high deficiency, adjacency to existing parks to expand recreation opportunities, and lands to protect significant natural and cultural resources. The program's key to success is securing land that can support the facility development goals from the Needs Assessment and land that serves to protect significant natural and cultural resources. Private sector and community-based cooperation will be sought to leverage the cost-effectiveness

of acquisition monies through easements and donations of land and funds.

### **Park Development Program, \$15 Million**

A total of \$15 million has been proposed to develop new facilities, as well as improve and renovate existing facilities. These improvements are classified in the following funding categories:

#### **Athletic Fields**

A total of \$10 million would be used to convert up to 12 existing natural-turf rectangular fields to synthetic turf. The 2004 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment identified a shortage of rectangular fields. Across the county, there is a higher deficiency of this type of field than any other. By converting natural-turf fields to artificial turf, the playing capacity is estimated to increase by approximately 62% without additional land costs. These fields also provide a safer playing surface and require fewer maintenance dollars. Criteria to identify existing fields that would be priority candidates for conversion to synthetic turf have been established by the Park Authority Board

and include existing full-size rectangular fields that are lit or master planned for lighting, are geographically distributed throughout the county and reduce the deficiency of rectangular fields identified in the 2004 Needs Assessment.

#### **Trails and Stream Crossings**

The Park Authority's goal is to add 75 miles of trails and trail connections by 2013. A total of \$5 million would be used to further develop a countywide comprehensive trail network, including funding the design and construction of the Cross County Trail Phase II, stream valley trails and other planned trails throughout the county. Expansion of the trail network, trail connections and stream crossings will provide access to highly used recreation facilities that enhance residents' quality of life and health.

*For more information about the parks and park facilities bonds, contact the Fairfax County Park Authority, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 927, Fairfax, VA 20035, 703-324-8662, TTY 711. You can visit their Web page at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks) or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond).*

---

## **What Are Bonds?**

Bonds are a form of long-term borrowing used by most local governments to finance public facilities. Bond financing makes it possible to build public facilities with capacities based on future population estimates and to spread the cost over the useful life of the facilities.

### **Q Why referendums?**

**A** Because bonds constitute a future obligation of the county, Virginia law requires that voters in Fairfax County approve bonds through a referendum. You have the opportunity to vote either YES or NO on the questions. If the majority votes YES, then the Board of Supervisors will be authorized to sell bonds in the future to generate the funds for public safety, and parks and park facilities projects as needed. If the majority votes NO, the county cannot issue general obligation bonds to finance these projects, but may seek other forms of financing.

### **Q What is the cost of borrowing?**

**A** Borrowing always entails interest costs. Since the interest earned by holders of municipal bonds is exempt from federal taxes, interest rates for these bonds generally are lower than the rate charged

for private loans. Because of our county's reputation for sound financial management, Fairfax County has the highest credit rating possible for a local government: Triple-A from Moody's Investors Service Inc.; from Standard & Poor's Corp.; and from Fitch Ratings. As of April 28, 2006, only six states, 21 cities and 22 counties have Triple-A ratings from all three rating agencies. For this reason, Fairfax County's bonds sell at low interest rates, even compared with other tax-free bonds.

As an example of the cost savings of the Triple-A bond ratings, Fairfax County sold \$543.585 million in general obligation and refunding bonds on Aug. 3, 2005, at an interest rate of 3.882 percent, the fourth lowest interest rate achieved since the county was first awarded AAA by Moody's in 1975. This interest rate was 43 basis points under the Bond Buyer Index, which stood at 4.31 percent on Aug. 3, 2005. This difference results in a savings of \$8.963 million over the life of the bonds. Also the refunding resulted in a savings of approximately \$11.863 million net present value of the bonds refunded.

### **Q Will these bonds cause a tax rate increase?**

**A** Fairfax County has adopted a prudent financial management policy designed to protect its Triple-A rating. It calls for the county's net long-term debt to not exceed 3 percent of the total market value of taxable real and personal property in the county. It also provides that annual debt service (the cost of principal and interest payments) be kept below 10 percent of annual combined general fund spending, and that bond sales shall not exceed an average of \$275 million per year or \$1.375 billion over 5 years.

For Fiscal Year 2005, the county's actual net long-term debt as of June 30, 2005, was 1.22 percent of the market value of all taxable real and personal property. Debt service costs in Fiscal Year 2005 were 8.0 percent of the combined general fund disbursements. The Fiscal Year 2007-2011 Capital Improvement Program adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 1, 2006, anticipates issuance of an average of \$275 million of bonds per year. This policy is expected to keep debt service at approximately 8 percent of general fund disbursements, which will maintain a balance between



operating expenses and long-term capital needs.

As long as debt service remains a constant or near-constant percentage of general fund disbursements, the county's debt for acquisition and construction of public facilities would not cause any increase in the property tax rate. If the county was to eliminate or reduce the amount of bonds sold annually and continue to pay off outstanding debts, this ratio would decrease and possibly allow a decrease in tax rates, but it could also necessitate stopping all or most capital construction. If capital construction continued on a pay-as-you-go basis out of current tax revenues, expenditures would be limited to a much shorter time frame, which could necessitate tax rate increases or a significant reduction in other county services.

## Q Do I vote on the two questions as a package or separately?

A Separately. The Nov. 7 ballot will include the parks and park facilities, and public safety facilities bonds as two individual questions.

## Q Can the bonds on the Nov. 7 ballot be used for projects other than public safety and parks and park facilities?

A Proceeds of the sale of bonds authorized for a specific purpose may not, by law, be used to finance projects for any purpose other than the purpose specified in the referendum question. In other words, the proceeds of the sale of park bonds may not be used to finance other projects, such as libraries or storm drainage projects.

## Q Why put forth additional referendums if there are still unsold bonds?

A Fairfax County bond packages are planned to fund specific projects. This means that all previous bond authorizations were planned for or are obligated to specific projects. These projects often take several years to complete, thus leaving outstanding or unissued bonds. Bonds are sold only as the money is needed. Prudent financial management dictates bonds should not be sold until the actual cash is required.

Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities. This document is available in alternative formats, and special accommodations/alternative information formats will be provided upon request. Please call the Office of Public Affairs at 703-324-3187, TTY 711.

## FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

### Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman

Fairfax County Government Center  
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 530  
Fairfax, VA 22035-0079  
703-324-2321 TTY: 703-324-2319 Fax: 703-324-3955  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman  
E-mail: chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Sharon Bulova, Vice Chairman, Braddock District

Kings Park Library  
9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015-1608  
703-425-9300 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-503-9583  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock  
E-mail: braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Joan M. DuBois, Dranesville District

McLean Governmental Center (Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)  
1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean, VA 22101-3415  
703-356-0551 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-821-4275  
Herndon Office (staffed Mon.-Wed., Fri., 8 a.m.-noon.)  
730 Elden Street, Herndon, VA 20170-4637  
703-471-5076 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-437-3210  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dranesville  
E-mail: dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Michael R. Frey, Sully District

Sully District Governmental Center  
4900 Stonecroft Boulevard, Chantilly, VA 20151-3808  
703-814-7100 TTY: 703-814-7109 Fax: 703-814-7110  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/sully  
E-mail: sully@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Penelope A. Gross, Mason District

Mason District Governmental Center  
6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003-2029  
703-256-7717 TTY: 703-642-3540 Fax: 703-354-8419  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mason  
E-mail: mason@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Catherine M. Hudgins, Hunter Mill District

North County Governmental Center  
12000 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston, VA 20190-3307  
703-478-0283 TTY: 703-736-4460 Fax: 703-471-6847  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/huntermill  
E-mail: hntermill@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Gerry W. Hyland, Mount Vernon District

Mount Vernon Governmental Center  
2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306-2799  
703-780-7518 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-780-1491  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon  
E-mail: mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Dana Kauffman, Lee District

Franconia Governmental Center  
6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria, VA 22310-2508  
703-971-6262 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-971-3032  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/lee  
E-mail: leedist@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Elaine McConnell, Springfield District

West Springfield Governmental Center  
(Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)  
6140 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA 22152-1579  
703-451-8873 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-451-3047  
Fairfax County Government Center  
(Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)  
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 233  
Fairfax, VA 22035-0001  
703-324-2500 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-324-3149  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield  
E-mail: springfield@fairfaxcounty.gov

### Linda Q. Smyth, Providence District

8739 Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22031-2198  
703-560-6946 TTY: 711 Fax: 703-207-3541  
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/providence  
E-mail: providist@fairfaxcounty.gov



Fairfax County Bond Referendums Resident Information  
Office of Public Affairs  
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 551  
Fairfax, VA 22035

PRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 45  
FAIRFAX VA

FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

## 2006 Bond Referendums Information for Residents

Fall 2006